

EDITORIAL PAGE

Norman Thomas, CIA Agent

Mr. Norman Thomas courteously disagrees with our columnist, William F. Buckley, Jr., on the issues paramount in Santo Domingo. In our Forum today, he takes Mr. Buckley to task. The pamphlet he has sent is an orthodox performance of the school of thought that asks, why let cynical and corrupt generals rule, when cynical and corrupt socialists are willing and able? In short, it is a defense of the anti-Communist purity of former Dominican President, Juan Bosch—who no doubt was the kind of President Mr. Thomas six times aspired to be in the United States.

No notice need be taken here of these sentiments. However, it is certainly curious Mr. Thomas is so vehemently opposed to U. S. intervention in the affairs of the Dominican Republic. The pamphlet which he sends with his introduction is published in New York by the Institute for International Labor Research, an organization of which he happens to be chairman. The secretary-treasurer is one Sacha Volman, a Romanian refugee now a citizen of this country. The Institute is a tax-exempt "educational" organization.

Slightly more than one year ago, this socialist outfit came under fire in tax hearings before a committee of the House of Representatives. Together with unspecified grants from Harvard and Brandeis Universities, the Institute received in 1963 \$395,000 from the J. M. Kaplan Fund of New York, also a tax-exempt fund.

A story in *The New York Times* on September 3, 1964, revealed that the \$395,000 was by far the largest grant that the Kaplan Fund had made that year, according to its tax report. At the same time, the Fund reported that it received a mysterious sum of \$395,750, identified only as "Receipts Not Reported Elsewhere." Was this evidence of an in-and-out transaction?

At a stormy House hearing chaired by Representative Wright Patman, representatives of the IRS testified that Kaplan Fund had not had its tax-exemption revoked because the foundation was being used as a "conduit" for CIA funds. The inescapable conclusion is that the CIA funneled \$395,000 into Norman Thomas's socialist Institute for International Labor Research. Moreover, indications were that similar financial arrangements had been in effect for a number of years. The question is: What for?

Well, the Institute for International Labor Research has been interested in the Caribbean revolution for quite a while. J. M. Kaplan, organizer of the Fund, is a wealthy financier, former president of the Welch Grape Juice Company, who spent a decade in Latin American sugar - producing countries. In the late Fifties, Kaplan, through his tax-exempt foundation, organized an ambitious propaganda organization in Costa Rica: The Institute of Political Research. Principals in this operation were the Romulo Betancourt gang — Jose Figueres, Haya de la Torre, Juan Bosch, and Sacha Volman. When Trujillo was assassinated, the shop moved to Santo Domingo.

Rumors abound that when Juan Bosch returned to the Dominican Republic, his election was bought and paid for by the CIA, using well-established techniques of buying and intimidating an ignorant and illiterate populace. At any rate, the first thing that Juan Bosch did was to turn the direction of state-planning activities over to the American, Sacha Volman. To do the job, Volman set up a private organization, Inter-American Center for Social Studies. Like magic, funds materialized from the Ford Foundation and the Parvin Foundation of California. According to *The New York Times*, funds also came from the Agency for International Development—the foreign aid branch of the U. S. State Department. Although the story had been given out by the Bosch government that the socialization of the Dominican Republic had been entrusted to Sacha Volman because he was an "anti-Communist," the same Sacha Volman was the first person kicked out of Santo Domingo after the coup of September, 1963, because of his Marxist ideas.

So on the one hand Sacha Volman is secretary-treasurer of the Norman Thomas group, which received \$395,000 from the CIA, and on the other he is director of the Bosch regime outfit, which was supported in part by U. S. foreign aid. In both cases, the intention was the same: to impose an anti-capitalist ideology on a defenseless nation by U. S. government intervention. The explanation, of course, is that the halls of U. S. policy are filled with contending factions, interventionists all. Mr. Thomas would prefer to have all the intervention on his side.

Norman Thomas Hits Buckley's Column

Editor, The News Leader:

Mr. William F. Buckley Jr. in his column carried by your paper on October 8 says about what one would expect Mr. Buckley to say; that is, he, who is very skeptical of American big government at home, believes he has the wisdom and power to police the world by intervening in other people's civil wars and that Washington, no matter how badly advised, always knows better than its critics in this kind of foreign policy.

I am sending for your information a carefully prepared pamphlet which gives a very different statement of facts. In this letter I have to content myself with saying that the net result of the American intervention was, as I had expected, a very substantial increase in Communist strength and influence.

Imbert, whom we supported until we found him impossible, has a record of playing with Communists as Bosch never did. We are weaker in opposing both communism and the military-oligarchy type of government which curses so much of Latin American by our policy in the Dominican Republic. The constitutionalists would probably have won and had better order than now exists except for our intervention.

NORMAN THOMAS

New York City.

• Editorial comment at left.
EDITOR.

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